



United States Attorney's Office
District of Columbia

Channing D. Phillips
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PRESS RELEASE

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Former Maritime Administration employee pleads guilty to fraud in connection with identification information

--Over a 14-month period, woman uses identities of others to obtain over \$13,000 in loans over the Internet --

WASHINGTON - Stefanie Weathers, a 42-year-old Summerville, South Carolina woman, has pled guilty to fraud in connection with identification information in connection with using the identification information of others to obtain loans over the Internet, Acting U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips announced today.

Weathers entered her guilty plea earlier today in U.S. District Court before the Honorable Paul L. Friedman. Weathers, who is scheduled to be sentenced on January 14, 2010, faces a statutory penalty of up to 15 years in jail, three years of supervised release, and a fine. Under the terms of the guilty plea, Weathers agreed to pay the victims \$13,250.00 in restitution. Under the federal sentencing guidelines, Weathers faces a likely sentencing range of 15 to 21 months.

During the plea hearing, Weathers admitted that between November 22, 2006 and February 11, 2008, she possessed the identification information, such as names, dates of birth and social security numbers, of more than ten individuals and fraudulently used this information to obtain loans over the internet from more than ten companies. All of the loan proceeds were deposited into accounts controlled by and belonging to Weathers. Weathers admitted that, among other methods, she used her work computer and a fax machine at the Maritime Administration in Washington, D.C. to obtain the fraudulent loans. She also admitted that, using the means of identification of others, she created driver's licenses, earning and leave statements, bank statements and checks to use as documentation in the scheme to fraudulently obtain loans.

In announcing the guilty plea, Acting U.S. Attorney Phillips praised the efforts of Department of Transportation Office of the Inspector General Special Agent Dennis Ocampo, who conducted the investigation in this case. He also commended Paralegal Maggie McCabe of the U.S. Attorney's Office who assisted in the prosecution, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas J. Hibarger, who is prosecuting the case.

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